



SPROUTS & ALL THAT; REVENGE OF THE SPROUTS

By Irene Airton

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SPROUTS AND ALL THAT

CHARACTERS

All the characters except JO are ladies of a certain age, but could be aged slightly up or down depending on the actors you have available.

LUPIN

Late forties/early fifties, Lupin is the hostess, gracious and pleasant but able to deliver the odd jibe if necessary.

JANE

Similar age to Lupin, but with a sharper tongue, Lupin and Jane's daughters are often in competition for parts in the nativity but they managed to stay friends. Jane does not suffer fools gladly, or indeed at all.

LIZ

A slightly quieter member of the group, but manages to hold her own against Jane and Lupin..

SUE

The gentler member of the group who often takes a little longer to grasp the nuances of the conversation.

JO

Twenties or early thirties. Jo is a female plumber and very glamorous.

MRS PATTERSON-SMYTHE

A similar age to Lupin and her friends or slightly older. A woman with a large personality and plenty of confidence.

GRANNY

Lupin's mother, who says very little but drinks a lot of sherry which she has hidden in close reach of the chair she sits in. When she does speak, she commands the room.

REVENGE OF THE SPROUTS

INT. LUPIN'S HOUSE, NEW YEAR'S DAY. BANNER READING HAPPY NEW YEAR AND THE REMAINS OF STREAMERS, GLASSES ETC STREWN ABOUT. GRANNY IS SITTING IN HER CHAIR WITH A PARTY HAT ON HER HEAD SURROUNDED BY AN ECLECTIC COLLECTION OF BOTTLES FROM WHICH SHE DRINKS FROM TIME TO TIME, SOMETIMES MIXING THE CONTENTS IF THEY'RE NOT TO HER LIKING. GRANNY CLEARLY DOES NOT JUST DRINK AT CHRISTMAS. IF SHE IS AWAKE, SHE KNITS THE LONGEST SCARF IN THE HISTORY OF WOOLLEN GARMENTS. LUPIN IS SITTING AT THE TABLE, SHE PUTS TWO ALKA-SELTZER TABLETS IN A GLASS, WATCHES THEM, ADDS TWO MORE, THINKS ABOUT IT AND DRINKS FROM THE WINE BOTTLE ON THE TABLE. SHE PICKS UP HER PHONE AND PUNCHES IN A NUMBER.

LUPIN

Hello Jo, is that you? Thank God. I need you to come round straightaway, the washing machine is dumping water on the floor and has been for several hours...No I haven't been stuffing it up with tassels and sequins. It's like Niagara Falls in there, and the dishwasher's decided to join in. Poor Brutus was halfway down the drive on a giant wave, ten minutes later and he'd have been washed out to sea. And that's not all, the showerhead came off this morning and nearly brained Phillip, he's lying down at the moment, I think he may have a concussion...because he seems to think he's Henry the Eighth. Right...right. Just come as soon as you can.

Hangs up and has another swig of wine. Doorbell rings, dog yaps.

LUPIN

(Through kitchen door) Stop that Brutus or I'm taking the life-jacket off.

LUPIN goes out through the hall door and re-enters with JANE

LUPIN

Come in, come in. I am so glad to see you.

JANE

Thanks, so did you have a good Christmas?

LUPIN

You don't want to know.

JANE

Trust me I do.

LUPIN

Well if we compare it to say The Great Fire of London or the Black Death, it wasn't so bad.

JANE

I'm sensing a 'but' here.

LUPIN

But if we're comparing it to anybody else's Christmas let's just say, it's not among my top ten.

JANE

Oh dear, what happened?

LUPIN

It started on Christmas Eve, when Hubert rang to say that he and his girlfriend wouldn't be coming because they'd decided to go to a retreat in India to find the meaning of life.

JANE

Oh, that's a shame.

LUPIN

Quite. I said couldn't they find the meaning of life after Christmas, I mean it's not going to change in a few days is it? But apparently there was an offer on, flights were cheap and their chakras were aligned, so off they went. I ask you, spending all that money, and they don't get fed you know. They're paying not to be fed and to sleep on the floor.

JANE

Sounds like a B&B I once stayed at in Great Yarmouth. But at least Persephone was here for you.

LUPIN

Ah, you'd think so wouldn't you? But no. As there was no nativity, Persephone decided to

go with her friend and her parents to their holiday home in the Carribean. I ask you, the Carribean. Bloody Johnny Depp has a lot to answer for.

JANE

That is a tough call. I mean, who would choose the Carribean with its sunshine and luxury over Christmas in the cold and rain here?

LUPIN

Exactly.

JANE

Still, you had the other rellies to help you celebrate.

LUPIN

Not entirely, my cousin's children came down with the chicken pox on Christmas Eve, so they couldn't come. And her husband's mother-in-law who had decided not to go to Australia had a change of mind and went. Decided that she wanted to see some crocodiles and feed a koala.

JANE

Let's hope she gets that the right way round.

LUPIN

Even the random woman who's been coming for years and no-one is quite sure who she is, rang to

say she was spending Christmas with her toyboy in Paris so she couldn't come either. So, long story short, Phillip, mummy and I sat down to a turkey the size of a corpulent ostrich. I've tried casseroling it, currying it, making soup from it and turkey surprise. To say nothing of the number of turkey sandwiches we've had to eat and still the blooming thing keeps going. I swear we'll be eating the blessed thing at Easter, possibly 'til next Christmas.

JANE

That's the thing about turkey, it tends to linger like an unwelcome guest. I have to ask, what exactly is turkey surprise?

LUPIN

There isn't one, it's just more bloody turkey.

Doorbells rings, dog yaps

LUPIN

Could you be a dear and quieten Brutus while I get the door?

JANE goes to the kitchen and speaks to the dog

JANE

Be quiet you silly little dog, or I'll have you made into a pair of slippers.

Dog stops

Enter LIZ and SUE with LUPIN

LIZ

Happy New Year everyone.

ALL

Happy New Year.

JANE

Though I don't know what's so happy about it. The new year did not get off to a good start in my house.

SUE

Why ever not?

JANE

Bill insisted on going out to let the New Year in. Went out the back door, fell over the wheelie bin and fractured his coccyx. It'll be Easter before he can sit down without wincing.

LIZ

Poor Bill.

JANE

It's his own fault. If he hadn't insisted on drinking a toast every two minutes, he might have seen the wheelie bin instead of trying to dance a Paso Doble with it. Honestly, we toasted the Queen, Prince Charles, well frankly every member of the royal

family. I drew the line when he started on the corgis.

SUE

Bill is very patriotic. We've all seen the union jack pants.

JANE

That's not all, we then had to toast the army, the navy, the RAR, the House of Commons, the House of Lords and for some bizarre reason...Vanessa Feltz.

LIZ

OK, that is bizarre.

JANE

To top it all, he bought a kilt from the charity shop and insisted on doing the highland fling. Put me off my sausage rolls I can tell you.

LUPIN

Perhaps he's having a mid-life crisis.

SUE

Or possibly a nervous breakdown.

LIZ

Or he's just gone plain bonkers.

JANE

Well whatever it was, it was a New Year to remember. Four hours in A&E trying to stop Bill leading the community singing and